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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE — Radio Service — OFFICE OF INFORMATION

HOMEMAKERS' CHAT — SATURDAY, January 14, 1939

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "TIPS FOR FOOD SHOPPERS." Information from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. D. A. and the Consumers' Counsel, A.A.A.

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Once more comes news for the family food-shopper. Once more our fortnightly tips on prices and supplies of seasonal foods. Today I have some tips on meat, butter, eggs, chickens, winter fruits and vegetables, canned vegetables and dried foods.

First, about meat. During 1939 you can expect to find more pork in the markets than last year. Perhaps you remember that the pig crop was larger last spring. And then the relationship between feed costs and hog prices has been favorable. So until summer anyway you can count on more pork in the market than in 1938.

You can also count on more better-grade beef than last year, though probably the total marketing of cattle will be smaller. Many farmers are building up their breeding herds so are not selling so many cows, heifers and calves. If there is more consumer demand for beef in the next few months, as there may be, that will tend to keep prices up on all kinds of cattle. Prices of better-grade cattle usually go down during the first half of the year while prices of the lower grades usually go up.

Now about lamb. The season for fed lambs runs from December to April. This season the supply of these lambs is a little smaller than usual while marketings of other lambs and sheep may be larger. The total live weight of both sheep and lambs slaughtered in the present fed-lamb marketing season probably will be higher than last season's total.

As for butter and eggs, here's the news. The seasonal high point for butter prices usually comes in December. From now on until early summer you can expect increased milk production which probably will add to the already large storage supplies of butter and other dairy products.

Fresh egg production has started up and you can expect more and more eggs until late spring. Low feed costs continue to be one big reason for higher egg production. As you know, egg prices generally go down until the spring months when they are cheapest of any time during the year. But prices may rise temporarily during January and February if the weather becomes unusually cold.

That brings me to the news about spring chickens. You can expect more broilers--that is, young chickens weighing from 2 and a half to 3 and a half pounds--on the market this spring. Broilers will be plentiful and prices will not go up as much as usual at this time of year.

So much for the news of meat, butter, eggs and chickens. Now about vegetables and fruits.

Plentiful supplies of winter vegetables are coming into market from southern and western States. If frost doesn't make trouble with these crops, you can count on plenty of fresh vegetables. Just now celery and new cabbage are coming to market. Though Florida growers didn't put in quite as many acres of celery this year as last, celery shipments from Florida seem to be large. Even more fresh cabbage is coming than we had last year.

Better plan generously for snap beans, beets, cabbage, egg plant and green peppers in your meals. Those are the vegetables that are coming in larger supplies. But there won't be so much spinach on the market or carrots, cauliflower, lettuce and tomatoes. Count on more sweetpotatoes and fewer white potatoes.

As for canned vegetables, there are more cans of snap beans, lima beans, and peas for sale and fewer cans of tomatoes and tomato juice than a year ago.

The biggest fruit news still is the record crop of citrus fruits--oranges, grapefruit and tangerines. The citrus fruit people have been promised lower costs of distribution so you can expect bargain prices for these fruits.

And before I forget, let me suggest that any time now you can start whetting your appetite for strawberry shortcake. Many more Florida acres are growing early strawberries this year than last.

Every thrifty housewife considers dried fruits and vegetables for her winter meals. This year there are large supplies of raisins on the market but smaller supplies of dried prunes, dried peaches and dried apricots. More dried beans are for sale this year--more dried beans and peanuts and rice. Your best buys among dried foods will probably be raisins and beans, peanuts and rice.

That's all the food shopping tips for today. But perhaps I'd better remind you that the Department of Agriculture has bulletins or leaflets to help you in cooking many of the foods just mentioned. Have you a copy of the rice leaflet, for example? This leaflet is No. 112. It is called "Cooking American Varieties of Rice." You can have a copy by writing the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. for it.

Then there are 2 leaflets to help you cook pork properly. One is called "Pork in Preferred Ways." That's the leaflet on cooking fresh pork and it is No. 45. The other is called "Cooking Cured Pork." That is leaflet No. 81. Order from the Department of Agriculture.

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